**Supply of Items to Government Departments by NCCF**

1708. SHRI O. P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have permitted the National Consumer Co-operative Federation (NCCF) to supply stationery and other items to Government Departments;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and whether there is any proposal to permit other co-operative societies the same privilege;

(c) whether NCCF does not have similar infrastructure as are possessed by Kendriya Bhandar/Super Bazar;

(d) whether NCCF has authorised the suppliers to go round Government Departments with NCCF bill books to obtain supply orders and to present their bills for payments;

(e) whether NCCF suppliers do not mention the full description of the items with their proper names in their bills;

(f) the number of letters received in this regard by Government from MPs and the action taken thereon; and

(g) the steps Government propose to take to safeguard the cheating of the public money by the suppliers of the NCCF and to ban their entry in the Government buildings and to send their indents by hand to the institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The NCCF as a National has necessary infrastructure and expertise has necessary infra-structure and expertise for supply of various consumer goods including stationery items. Local Central/ wholesale consumer co-operative societies are also permitted to undertake supply of stationery and other items to the Government Departments.

(d) and (e) No, Sir

(f) One reference from Department of Personnel and Training enclosing a letter from an M.P. was received for comments of this Ministry. We have furnished our comments to that Department accordingly.

(g) The NCCF has not authorised any supplier to represent the NCCF and therefore the question does not arise.

**Average Index of Pulses**

1709. SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the monthly average index of pulses in the official wholesale index for the month of September 1994;

(b) whether it is a fact that it has risen by 17% over the level a year ago;

(c) what is the percentage rise in wholesale price of the Urad, Masur and Gram pulses during the month of September, 1994; and

(d) the reasons for the rise in the prices and what steps Government are taking to bring down their prices and by when prices are expected to come down?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI H. R BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) A comparative statement indicating the index numbers of wholesale prices of pulses during September, 1994 and September, 1993 is given in Statement (*See* below).

(d) The rise in the prices of pulses can be attributed to the existing gap of over 20 lakh tonnes in the demand and supply of pulses in the country. The consumption of pulses has increased at a faster pace due to increase in population over the years and their production has increased relatively at a slow pace. The Government has accorded the highest priority to controlling the rise in prices of pulses within reasonable limits. The prices and availability of pulses are reviewed at the highest level on regular basis and appropriate and timely action taken both for augmenting their supplies through raising indigenous production as well as through imports. Import of pulses has been placed under Open General Licence (OGL). The import of pulses during 1993-94 was higher at 6.27 lakh tonnes as against 3.82 lakh tonnes during 1992-93. During the current financial year (April-August, 1994) a quantity of 2.41 lakh tonnes of pulses has been imported as against 1.80 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period of last year.

**Statement**

*Index Numbers of Wholesale Prices of Pulses and their percentage variation*
(Base : 1981-82=100)

| Commodity | Wholesale Price Index | | Percentage Variation |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Sept. 1994 | Sept. 1993 | Sept. 1994 / Sept. 1993 |
| **Pulses** | 361.4 | 308.0 | +17.3 |
| Gram . . . . . | 384.6 | 330.1 | +16.5 |
| Arhar . . . . . | 346.5 | 323.9 | +7.0 |
| Moong . . . . . | 294.7 | 272.0 | +8.3 |
| Masoor . . . . . | 294.9 | 240.3 | +22.7 |
| Urad . . . . . | 436.8 | 291.5 | +49.8 |

SOURCE : Office of the Economic Adviser, Ministry of Industry.

**Items under Certified Standard Quality Category**

1710. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) how many items belong to the certified standard quality category ;

(b) what is the machinery for watching the observance of the specified quality and other conditions ;

(c) whether in practice, BIS standards fail to protect consumers and if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) which are the common public complaints/grievances brought to the notice of the authorities and what steps are taken to redress them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) The number of product presently covered under BIS product Certification Marks Scheme is 1438.

(b) Before granting the licence to use ISI Mark, BIS satisfies itself that the manufacturer is capable of producing goods Standard on a continued basis. Indian Standard on a continued basis. Every licensee has to follow a well defined Scheme of Testing and Inspection which prescribes the specific tests and their frequency. The quality of products of the licensees in relation to the relevant Indian Standards is watched by BIS through the surveillance mechanism provided under the Certification Marks Scheme which include periodic surprise inspections of the manufacturing premises and testing of products of the licensees by the competent engineers and scientists of BIS.

(c) By prescribing quality parameters, Indian Standards protect the interests of consumers.

(d) Complaints/grievances mainly relate to the quality of ISI-marked products. These are thoroughly investigated and, if found correct, both corrective as well as punitive actions are taken against the licensees. The licensees are also required to arrange redressal of the complaints by way of replacement/repairs of the products.

**Extension/Reappointment of Members of District Consumer Forum**

1711. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether extension can be given to the Members of the District Consumer Forum or they can be reappointed ;

(b) if so the details thereof ;

(c) which are the districts consumer foram in which the Members have been given extension of their term and where they have been reappointed ; and

(d) the body or authority to whom such matters are referred and whose decision is final in such cases ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) to (d) According to Section 10(2) of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, as amended in 1993, every member of the District Forum shall hold office for a term of 5 years or upto the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier, and shall not be eligible for reappointment.